

Message Text

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SUBJECT:U.S. NUCLEAR INITIATIVES TO BE TABLED AT MARCH 16

IEA GOVERNING BOARD MEETING

1. U.S. PAPER ON NEXT PHASE OF IEA ACTIVITY TO BE TABLED AT MARCH 16 GOVERNING BOARD MEETING CONTAINS SERIES OF NEW PROPOSALS FOR IMPLEMENTATION OF LONG-TERM PROGRAM. TWO OF THESE ARE IN NUCLEAR AREA AND SHOULD BE MADE KNOWN TO SCHMIDT-KUESTER AND HERZIG ASAP. PLEASE GIVE THEM FOLLOWING EXTRACT FROM U.S. PAPER AND ATTEMPT TO OBTAIN PRELIMINARY REACTION. TEXT SHOULD BE TREATED AS IEA CONFIDENTIAL.

2. COOPERATION IN SPECIFIC ENERGY SECTORS.

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WE HAVE AGREED UNDER THE LONG-TERM PROGRAM (CHAPTER III B, IEA/GB (75) (3RD REV)) TO COOPERATE IN EFFORTS TO INCREASE PRODUCTION OF ENERGY FROM SPECIFIC ENERGY SECTORS. WE HAVE ALREADY BEGUN WORK PROGRAMS IN THE NUCLEAR AND COAL SECTORS. THESE TWO ENERGY SOURCES REPRESENT THE MAJOR ALTERNATIVES TO CONTINUING DEPENDENCE ON IMPORTED OIL AVAILABLE OVER THE NEXT DECADE. IF WE DO NOT ACHIEVE A SUBSTANTIAL CONTRIBUTION TO ENERGY SUPPLIES FROM THESE TWO SOURCES IN THIS TIME PERIOD, IT IS HIGHLY UNLIKELY THAT WE CAN ACHIEVE OUR REDUCED DEPENDENCE OBJECTIVES. THEREFORE, THEY SHOULD RECEIVE OUR PRIORITY ATTENTION. WE ALSO PROPOSE THAT THE SLT IN BOTH ITS COAL AND NUCLEAR REVIEWS STUDY THE DIMENSIONS OF POSSIBLE UNAVOIDABLE SHORTFALLS IN EXPECTED OUTPUT LEVELS. THESE SEPARATE ANALYSES COULD FORM THE BASIS OF A FUTURE ENERGY CONTINGENCY STUDY TO DETERMINE THE ROLE OF INTER-FUEL SUBSTITUTION OR OTHER MEASURES THAT MIGHT BE NEEDED IF THESE SHORTFALLS ACTUALLY DO TAKE PLACE.

A. NUCLEAR SECTOR - LAST SPRING WE BEGAN A MAJOR EXERCISE TO (1) ASSESS MEMBER COUNTRY NUCLEAR PROGRAMS; (2) IDENTIFY MAJOR OBSTACLES TO THE ACHIEVEMENT OF NATIONAL NUCLEAR OBJECTIVES; AND (3) TO FORMULATE AND ADOPT, WHEREVER POSSIBLE AND DESIRABLE, JOINT MEASURES AND PROGRAMS TO OVERCOME THESE OBSTACLES.

THUS FAR, THIS EFFORT HAS PROCEEDED SATISFACTORILY. THE MOST RECENT REVIEW OF IEA MEMBER COUNTRY NUCLEAR PROGRAMS WILL BE COMPLETED WITHIN THE NEXT FEW WEEKS. A NUMBER OF OBSTACLES TO THE REALIZATION OF NATIONAL OBJECTIVES HAVE ALREADY BEEN IDENTIFIED SUCH AS UNCERTAINTY OVER FUTURE SUPPLY AND DEMAND FOR NATURAL AND ENRICHED URANIUM UNDER BOTH NORMAL AND EMERGENCY CONDITIONS, PUBLIC ACCEPTANCE OF NUCLEAR ENERGY, AND REPROCESSING AND OTHER PROBLEMS ASSOCIATED WITH THE BACK END OF THE FUEL CYCLE.

BUT FORMULATION AND IMPLEMENTATION OF COOPERATIVE PROGRAMS TO MEET THESE PROBLEMS COULD BE IMPROVED BY AVOIDING THE CURRENT DISPERSION OF RESPONSIBILITY FOR CONSIDERATION OF THESE NUCLEAR QUESTIONS AMONG A NUMBER LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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OF WORKING GROUPS.

THE UNITED STATES PROPOSES THAT THE SLT PREPARE A WORKING MANDATE FOR A NEW NUCLEAR FUEL CYCLE SUB-GROUP. WE BELIEVE THAT THE MANDATE OF THIS NEW GROUP SHOULD INCLUDE RESPONSIBILITY FOR:

-- NUCLEAR POWER FORECASTS, INCLUDING A COMPARISON OF

FORECASTING TECHNIQUES AND METHODS FOR TRANSLATING THIS INFORMATION INTO REQUIREMENTS AND EXAMINATION OF THE NEED FOR FACILITIES FOR NATURAL URANIUM, CONVERSION, ENRICHMENT SERVICES, FUEL FABRICATION, CHEMICAL REPROCESSING, URANIUM AND PLUTONIUM RECYCLE, WASTE TREATMENT, AND WASTE STORAGE;

-- DEVELOPMENT OF CRITERIA FOR ASSESSING NATIONAL NUCLEAR PROGRAMS AND THE IDENTIFICATION OF CONSTRAINTS ON THE USE OF NUCLEAR POWER AND WAYS TO REMOVE THEM; DETERMINATION OF WHAT UNAVOIDABLE SHORTFALLS IN NUCLEAR POWER OUTPUT MIGHT OCCUR AS A FUNCTION OF TIME THAT WOULD REQUIRE PREPARATION OF SUBSTITUTE ENERGY RESOURCES OR CONSERVATION MEASURES. THESE WOULD BE IDENTIFIED IN THE SEPARATE CONTINGENCY STUDY TO BE CONDUCTED UNDER SLT AUSPICES.

-- EXAMINATION OF ALL FACETS OF THE FRONT END OF THE FUEL CYCLE INCLUDING: NATURAL URANIUM, CONVERSION AND ENRICHMENT SERVICES, AND FUEL FABRICATION TO HELP ASSURE ADEQUATE CAPABILITY TO SUPPORT NUCLEAR POWER NEEDS; EXAMINING WAYS TO IDENTIFY NEW FAVORABLE LOCATIONS FOR NATURAL URANIUM RESOURCES THROUGHOUT THE WORLD; EXPLORING THE NEED FOR AND DEVELOPMENT OF STOCKPILES, AND AN EMERGENCY SHARING MECHANISM FOR BOTH NATURAL AND ENRICHED URANIUM.

-- EXAMINATION OF ALL FACETS OF THE BACK END OF THE NUCLEAR FUEL CYCLE TO HELP ASSURE ADEQUATE CAPACITY INCLUDING: CHEMICAL REPROCESSING, URANIUM AND PLUTONIUM RECYCLE, AND WASTE MANAGEMENT (INTERNATIONAL AND NATIONAL PLANNING OF WASTE STORAGE SITES).

-- EXAMINATION OF FINANCIAL REQUIREMENTS FOR ALL FACETS LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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OF THE NUCLEAR FUEL CYCLE TO IDENTIFY COOPERATIVE ACTION.

THE COMMITTEE ON ENERGY RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT WOULD CONTINUE TO HAVE RESPONSIBILITY FOR NUCLEAR FUEL CYCLE RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT BUT WOULD CLOSELY COORDINATE ITS OVERALL PROGRAM PLANNING AND INDIVIDUAL RESEARCH STRATEGIES WITH THE NUCLEAR FUEL CYCLE SUB-GROUP. THE AD HOC NEA/IEA R&D GROUP NOW EXAMINING PORTIONS OF THE WASTE MANAGEMENT AND REPROCESSING CYCLE SHOULD COMPLETE ITS WORK UNDER THE PRESENT STRUCTURE. KISSINGER

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